Staffing Shortage Solutions

To develop your staffing solutions, consider these actions and strategies.

Position Classification Actions

These actions include:

- streamlining job duties for more efficiency
- modifying titles to incorporate new duties
- creating new job titles
- redesigning titles to accommodate new work patterns
- reallocating titles to meet emerging business needs.

Recruitment and Selection Strategies

These include actions to recruit and hire qualified candidates. To enhance your current competitive hiring process:

- determine the strengths of your organization
- ask staff to identify reasons they like their jobs
- research best-practice recruitment strategies
- incorporate strategies that successful organizations use (for example, online recruitment and effective interviewing techniques)
- create a comprehensive recruitment strategy to ensure that your organization is the "employer of choice"
- create strategies to re-employ retirees for part-time and/or temporary work, evaluate candidates for all job openings, and recruit minorities and women.

Retention Strategies

Once you've hired the best, you'll want strategies to keep them. To build a formal retention plan:

- develop an effective orientation program
- ensure managers and supervisors can facilitate transition into the organization through the assignment of buddies, frequent meetings with the new employee, and training
- implement a reward and recognition program that acknowledges the work of exceptional employees and appeals to all workers

- assign interesting and challenging work
- reduce negative workplace practices
- provide benefits that increase loyalty (for example, wellness program, flextime, free parking, training, and tuition reimbursement)
- research and implement best practice retention ideas
- provide opportunities for all staff to continually enhance skills and increase learning.

Organizational Interventions

Organizational interventions could include:

- permanent redeployment of staff
- temporary assignment of staff
- new organizational structure
- job shadowing for key jobs before an individual retires
- establishment of mentoring programs
- mandatory training for employees in key positions.

Knowledge Transfer Strategies

Create formal and informal processes to capture the knowledge of experienced workers before they leave. Knowledge management strategies include:

- apprenticeships, internships, and traineeships
- best practices
- communities of practice
- documentation of processes
- document repositories
- expert interviews
- job aids
- knowledge audits
- knowledge fairs
- knowledge maps and inventories
- learning games
- lessons learned debriefings
- mentoring
- on-the-job training
- storytelling
- training.

Staff-Development Strategies

Because filling key positions that open up due to retirement and changing business needs is an ongoing problem, develop career-development strategies that routinely prepare replacements for staff in key positions.

Provide skill-building opportunities (formal and informal) for all staff through a variety of job assignments, training sessions, self study, coaching, job shadowing, job enrichment and rotation, and so forth.

In addition, use a standardized career-development process to ensure all employees know how to develop the skills necessary to be considered for lateral and promotional opportunities.

Devote significant time to creating training options that ensure staff have the skills to fill future positions. Some actions to consider when designing training opportunities include:

- identifying competencies (general and job specific) for executives, management, and front-line staff
- prioritizing training options based on the organization's strategic goals and objectives
- determining the best way to train
- committing training funds for training needed to promote staff readiness for future job openings
- getting employee input about potential career options
- designing career-development programs for employees
- assessing the skills of high-potential employees.

- the individuals responsible for implementation of various strategies

- the schedule for information to be shared with employees, including the medium of communication.

■ *Anticipate Staff Reactions*
Be ready to respond to questions and barriers that arise at all points during the implementation process.

■ *Get Nay Sayers on Board*
Involve them in the process. Have them identify solutions to pitfalls that they identify.

Finally, frame the implementation of succession strategies as "continuous improvement" and communicate what worked and what will be improved during each step of the process.

Phase 4. Monitor, Evaluate, Revise

Once you have implemented the succession plan, monitor progress, evaluate the implementation and revise the plan as needed.

Monitor Progress

To monitor the implementation process, you need to:

- review progress at predetermined points in time (which should be part of the implementation plan)

- determine if the succession plan is on track to meet timeline objectives; if not, have the succession-planning team determine how to get back on schedule

- measure interim results as required, analyze results, and make changes in the work plan as necessary

- report progress to your organization's executives on a regular basis

- create and administer regularly scheduled communication briefings to keep staff informed and answer questions to clarify the project.